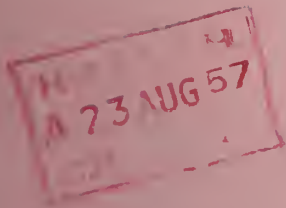


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(1)



KINGTON RURAL DISTRICT

Herefordshire



Joint

A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

Medical Officer of Health

and of the

Public Health Inspector

for the year 1956

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL
(As at 31st December, 1956)

W.C. Bevan (Chairman of the Council)...	...	Kinsham
W.P. Edwards (Vice-Chairman of the Council)		Staunton-on-Arrow
W. Davies		Eardisley
J.V. Duggan		Kington Rural
D. Edwards		Byton
Mrs. C.E. Hope		Whitney-on-Wye
J.D. Hutton		Lyonshall
J.C. Jay		Winforton with Willersley
H.H. Jones		Huntington
J. Jones		Kington Rural
R. Jones		Pembridge
R. Morris		Pembridge
H. Owens		Stapleton
Dr. J.P. Paul		Brilley
W.E. Pye		Titley
T. Thomas		Lyonshall
A.R. Wynne		Eardisley

Clerk to the Council ... A.W. Jones



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Medical Officer of Health

I.F. MACKENZIE, M.D. (Edin),
D.P.H., D.T.M. & H.
(resigned 31.10.56)

Acting Medical Officer of Health Ditto (from 1.11.56)

Public Health Inspector and

Surveyor E.R. CHILLINGFORD, M.R.S.H.,
M.A.P.H.I.

To the Chairman and Members of the Kington Rural District
Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Annual Report presented herewith has, as usual,
been prepared jointly by the Public Health Inspector and myself.

During the year under review, we had one of our
periodical epidemics of Measles. The disease was prevalent
during the first six months of the year, but the majority of
cases occurred during the second quarter. As is usual nowadays,
the infection was characteristically mild and serious compli-
cations were few.

It will be noted by those who are interested in
statistics that deaths from all causes in 1956 substantially
exceeded births. For the time being at least the natural
increase in our population, that is the excess of births over
deaths, is in abeyance. This change is due not to more
deaths occurring, but to far fewer babies being born. This is
the second successive year in which this disturbing phenomenon
has taken place; and unless there is a marked improvement
during 1957, a definite trend towards a low birth rate will
become established and we shall have to face, in due course,
the possibility of having a rapidly declining as well as an
ageing population.

On 24th November 1956, the Minister of Housing and
Local Government held a public inquiry into the Council's
proposals for the provision of a piped water supply through-
out the district. At the time of writing, the Minister's
decision is awaited with keen interest. From many points
of view, social, domestic, and economic, the whole future of
our district is bound up with that basic necessity of modern
community life - adequate supplies of wholesome piped water.
The evidence presented at the Inquiry by the Medical Officer
of Health on behalf of the Council is included as an addendum
to this report.

A noteworthy event of 1956 was the passing of the
Sanitary Inspectors (Change of Designation) Act which provides
that Sanitary Inspectors shall in future be called Public
Health Inspectors. Even a cursory study of the history of
public health in Britain will reveal to the student the key
position occupied by the Sanitary Inspector from earliest days.
That he should have been called Sanitary Inspector is a
tribute to him as an individual, to his profession, and also

to the good sense and the knowledge of the classics of our forbears, who thought it appropriate to give him a designation derived from the Latin, sanitas - pertaining to and concerned with the preservation of health. It may be a reflection on the lowly place now occupied by the classics in school curricula that "sanitary" is, in the minds of many people, more closely associated with drains than with "health" ; hence the decision of the House of Commons to give the Sanitary Inspector a new title.

The appointment of Dr. O.L. Evans as District Medical Officer of Health and as Assistant County Medical Officer, was made on December 5th, 1956. It was arranged that he would commence duty on March 1st, 1957, on which date my temporary appointment as Acting Medical Officer of Health will terminate.

In view of my recent change of appointment this will be the last annual report that I shall present to you as your Medical Officer of Health. I shall retain very warm memories of my years of service, and of the happy relations that exist among officers and between members of the council and staff, - a spirit of harmony that contributes much to the effectiveness of work in the local government service.

I.F. MACKENZIE

Medical Officer of Health

Public Health Office: 4, Church Street, Leominster.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

CLINICS

Under the County Council and Regional Hospital Board schemes the following clinic facilities are available to residents in the district:-

Infant Welfare Centres:

Church Hall, Kington, on alternate Tuesdays at 2 p.m.

The Institute, Pembrige, on the first Thursday in each month at 2.30 p.m.

Children are referred to the Ear Nose and Throat, Eye, Paediatric and Tuberculosis Clinics in Hereford and Leominster.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	44,472
Population	...	...	...	...	4,800
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1956) according to the Rate Books	...	...	...	...	1,477
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£24,509
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£96 (est)

EXTRACT FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

		<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
LIVE BIRTHS (Legitimate)	...	47	21	26
(Illegitimate)	...	1	-	1
Total	...	<u>48</u>		
STILL BIRTHS (Legitimate)	...	1	1	-
(Illegitimate)	...	Nil		
DEATHS	...	59	34	25
DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES		Nil		
DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE (Legitimate)	...	1	1	-
(Illegitimate)	...	Nil		

COMPARABLE DATA FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 1956

Birth Rate (per 1,000 estimated mid-year home population)	10.0
Birth Rate for England and Wales	15.7
Still Birth Rate (per 1,000 total live and still births)	20.4
Still Birth Rate for England and Wales	23.0
Death Rate (per 1,000 estimated mid-year home population)	12.3
Death Rate for England and Wales	11.7
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 related live births)	20.8
Infant Mortality Rate for England and Wales	23.8

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES AND INSPECTION

WATER SUPPLIES

The Rural District is still dependent on wells, springs and estate supplies, both private and public, throughout its area. No serious shortage of water occurred during the year under review, due mainly to the wet summer which enabled the majority of the shallow wells to maintain their normal level.

A Public Inquiry was held towards the close of the year in respect of the Council's proposed Comprehensive Water Scheme. Whilst the decision of the Minister of Housing and Local Government is still awaited, there is no doubt that the Council clearly demonstrated the urgent need of a piped water supply in the district.

Fortyfive samples of water for bacteriological examination were taken during 1956. Of these, nineteen were satisfactory, eighteen were unsatisfactory, and eight were suspicious. Advice was given to owners, and remedial measures to improve supplies were recommended where necessary.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

No substantial improvement was effected during the year in respect of the disposal arrangements for the two parishes that are sewered. The difficulty of treating increased quantities of sewage becomes greater year by year, particularly as the present methods of treatment are dependent on land irrigation and the area available for this purpose is limited. During the year the Council prepared detailed schemes for modernising the two existing sewage works; and for the sewerage of the parish of Lyonshall. These schemes, however, depend on the proposals under the Comprehensive Water Scheme being carried out in the first instance.

During the year continued use was made of Improvement Grants under the Housing Acts whereby assistance is given towards the cost of installing septic tank systems of drainage by private persons. This has improved the drainage arrangements of such individual properties and reduced the possibilities of nuisances accordingly.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

No complaints were received during the year.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

The work of refuse collection and disposal continued satisfactorily throughout the year. Existing tips are rapidly filling up however, and alternative sites are being sought for this purpose.

RODENT CONTROL

Systematic survey and treatment has been carried out, and rat infestation throughout the district has been kept under control. In addition to private and business property, the Council's sewers and disposal works, together with refuse pits, received routine attention.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS

Council house repairs	..	..	..	145
Housing Acts	..	..	..	89
Nuisances and Complaints	..	..	..	32
Building Byclaws	..	..	..	211
Water Supplies (general)	..	..	..	132
Water Samples taken	..	..	..	45
Milk and Dairies Regulations	..	..	..	27
Milk Samples taken	..	..	..	36
Food Premises	..	..	..	207
Disinfection following infectious disease				4
Disinfestation of verminous premises			..	1
Refuse Disposal	..	..	..	97
Sewerage	..	..	..	104
Hergest Camp	..	..	..	145
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	19
Total	..	..	..	1294

NOTICES ISSUED

Informal .. 10 : Statutory .. Nil: Complied with .. 8

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948

INSPECTIONS

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	10	12	-	-
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	2	4	-	-
(3) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	5	10	-	-
TOTAL	17	26	-	-

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Unsuitable or defective sanitary conveniences - 2 and those were remedied.

HOUSING

No building was carried out by the Council during the year, but negotiations proceeded in connection with the proposed alternative site at Staunton-on-Arrow.

The housing survey continued throughout the year, parish by parish; and the various properties inspected were classified. It is anticipated that the survey will be completed in 1957 when it will be possible to ascertain the Council's commitments and a slum clearance programme be determined.

Two houses were completed by private enterprise, and a further three houses were under construction at the end of the year.

Thirteen applications for Improvement Grants were received, four of which were subsequently withdrawn. Seven were approved.

Complaints in respect of housing accommodation were dealt with as they arose. At the end of the year there were only twentyone applications on the Council's waiting list, excluding Hergest Camp applicants.

Hergest Camp continued to provide temporary accommodation for sixty families, but the difficulty of keeping the hutments weatherproof and in reasonable repair is increasing rapidly. This will become a most expensive item in the future.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Two private slaughterhouses are licensed in the district. This has entailed routine visits on all occasions of slaughtering. One hundred and sixty such visits were made during the year, the number of animals inspected being as follows:-

Cattle	..	157	Sheep	..	596
Pigs	..	189	Calves	..	2

The quantity of meat rejected as unfit for human consumption was relatively small, consisting of the following:-

Cattle	..	1 head		
Sheep	..	1 whole carcase		
Pigs	..	1 whole carcase, 1 head, 1 hind quarter.		

together with 223 lbs. of offal.

Fortyseven visits were made to other food premises where conditions generally were satisfactory, due consideration being given to the age of the buildings concerned and the availability or otherwise of essential services.

Food premises are summarised as follows:-

General Stores	..	10	Cafes	..	1
Butchers Shops	..	2	Public Houses		11
Bakeries	..	2			

Number of premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938: 7

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

TUBERCULOSIS

At the end of 1956 the Tuberculosis Register contained the names of twentynine males and twentysix females who normally reside within the district.

During the year seven new cases were notified, four Pulmonary and three Non-Pulmonary; and six Pulmonary cases moved into the district.

During the same period three persons recovered, one left the district, two died from Tuberculosis, and one died from other causes.

ANALYSES OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES OF INFECTIOUS
DISEASE ACCORDING TO AGE

Disease	Age of Patient								TOTAL
	0-1	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25 & Over	Unk- nown	
Scarlet Fever	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Whooping Cough	1	4	2	3	1	-	-	1	12
Measles	-	23	25	73	13	3	3	8	148
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	-	4
Tuberculosis (Non-Pulmonary)	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	3

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946, Section 26
Vaccination and Immunisation

Numbers of children in the district who were treated
during the year:-

Purpose of Injection	Age of child								TOTAL
	Under 1 yr.	1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	4 yrs.	5-9 yrs.	10-14 yrs.	15 & Over	
Immunisation against Diphtheria	27	16	3	1	2	14	2	-	65
Immunisation against Whooping Cough	24	11	2	1	2	-	-	-	40
Vaccination against Smallpox	37	2	-	1	-	2	-	1	43

In addition to the above, 93 reinforcing injections
against Diphtheria were given, and two re-vaccinations
against Smallpox.

Vaccination and Immunisation are a County Council
responsibility, and the figures given above have been
kindly supplied by the County Medical Officer of Health.

CAUSES OF DEATH (all ages)

Disease	Males	Females	TOTAL
Tuberculosis, respiratory ...	1	-	1
Malignant neoplasm, stomach ...	1	4	5
Malignant neoplasm, breast ...	-	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, uterus ...	-	1	1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	6	-	6
Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	3	7	10
Coronary disease, angina ...	2	4	6
Hypertension with heart disease ...	-	1	1
Other heart disease ...	9	4	13
Other circulatory disease ...	1	1	2
Bronchitis ...	2	1	3
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ...	1	-	1
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ...	1	-	1
Nephritis and nephrosis ...	1	-	1
Hyperplasia of prostate ...	2	-	2
Congenital malformations ...	1	-	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	2	-	2
Accidents, other than motor vehicle	-	1	1
Suicide ...	1	-	1
All causes ...	34	25	59

COMPREHENSIVE WATER SCHEME

Public Inquiry by the Minister of Housing and Local Government at Kington, on 21st November, 1956.

Evidence presented by the Medical Officer of Health:-

- (1) The Water Act, 1945, placed a duty on the Kington Rural District Council to provide wholesome water in pipes to every part of their district in which there are houses or schools, and also to supply water for purposes other than domestic purposes. The comprehensive scheme under consideration has been prepared with the object of discharging that duty in those parts of the district in which the need is great and to which supplies of water can be most readily conveyed from the existing sources at Hergest and Byton (Shobdon).
- (2) Existing water supplies in Kington Rural District are, in the main, shallow wells situated close to the properties served. Many of them are subject to intermittent pollution with organisms of excretal origin and others are perpetually polluted, the water being unfit for human consumption in the raw state. Land springs provide water for a few properties and they also, from their nature, are variable in both quantity and quality.
- (3) Piped water supplies in the district are few in number and are privately owned, apart from those piped supplies installed by the Council under the Housing Acts and therefore restricted for use to Council house tenants. Only a comparatively small number of houses are connected in the parishes with the private piped supplies which are Staunton-on-Arrow, Whitney-on-Wye, and Titley. The Hergest and Byton Intakes and pumping stations and the water mains and reticulation at Hergest estate and in parts of the north of the district, being the subject of the Council's application are excluded from this survey.

None of our villages or hamlets has proper piped water with the exception of the three already mentioned. Our two largest villages, Pembridge and Eardisley, subsist on well waters, open to pollution and fluctuating in amount in accordance with the rainfall. Strict conservation has to be maintained by householders. The same applies to the aggregations of dwellings at, or near, the parish Church and the local school, in those parishes without a clearly defined village or hamlet. These scattered centres of population are badly in need of an augmented and reliable water supply and future development in the form of council house construction to meet local needs as well as the modernisation of existing dwellings, are dependent upon the provision of piped water. Council house schemes for several of these parishes have had to be set aside until

this comprehensive water scheme was approved. The absence of a complete piped supply in the village of Lyonshall has prevented the installation of sewers and sewage treatment works. Our consulting engineers have already prepared schemes for sewerage and sewage treatment works in Lyonshall and for the modernisation of existing sewerage and treatment facilities in Eardisley and Pembridge, in anticipation of the comprehensive water scheme.

- (4) The time that has elapsed since 1953 when the Council's preparations for this comprehensive scheme began, has disheartened and irritated people in our district who are suffering hardship through insufficient water. There is a public demand for piped water, which has been voiced not only to me as Medical Officer of Health, but to members of the Council as local representatives. Our piped water scheme is not something that is being thrust upon the people: there is no doubt but that the people want it.
- (5) The Water Act 1945 refers specifically to piped water for schools. At most of the nine schools in this district no piped water is available. The provision of school meals at these schools, coupled with the inadequacy of water, makes the maintenance of a reasonably satisfactory standard of hygiene very difficult, in spite of improvisations of one kind or another and of the efforts of the school staffs. The answer to this problem is our comprehensive water scheme.
- (6) The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has urged local authorities to encourage owners of old houses that are structurally sound, to modernise them using Improvement Grants, where applicable. Many of the people who would be eligible for these grants cannot obtain them because of their inability to comply with the conditions relating to indoor water supply, sanitation, and hot water systems. The standard of housing in the district could be raised by a wide use of Improvement Grants; and this improvement in housing would be reflected in rateable values. Publicity by the Council regarding Improvement Grants will be relatively ineffective until such time as piped water has been made available.
- (7) Production of Tuberculin Tested milk in the district and the attestation of both beef and dairy herds have been proceeding at a very rapid pace during recent years. The efforts of the local officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in this direction (and also to raise the general standard of farming in the county), have had another effect which is of interest to the Council as the Water Authority, in that, in the absence of a Council Water Scheme, farmers have been encouraged to provide their own supplies of pure water and many of them have, in fact, been given grant aid by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. The longer the delay

until the Council's water scheme is in operation, the larger will become the number of farmers who will not wish to connect to our water mains, and, therefore, the greater will become the annual loss of revenue to the Water Authority. This grant system constitutes a duplication of expenditure of public moneys that will probably continue until there is reasonable expectation of construction work beginning on our water scheme.

- (8) Under Section One of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, the Council were required to submit to the Ministry their proposals for dealing with houses that are unfit for human habitation. No detailed survey of housing in the District having been carried out, a provisional figure of 150 unfit houses was submitted. On the basis of data available from the two other Rural Districts in North Herefordshire in which complete surveys have been carried out and in which the general standard of housing is not obviously lower than that in Kington Rural District, I am of the opinion that it will ultimately be found that there are approximately 200 worn-out dwellings in our district.

The replacement of even 150 worn-out dwellings constitutes a problem of some magnitude for this Council; and no serious approach to dealing with it can be made unless approval is accorded the Council's proposals for piped water.

- (9) In order to discharge our statutory duty to rehouse persons living in unfit dwellings, new sites for council house construction will need to be acquired throughout the district. Selection of these sites will be greatly facilitated if our piped water scheme is approved. The difficulty of providing sufficient water at sites, even with the expense of sinking a bore, has been a stumbling-block in the past; and it has led to council house building being concentrated mainly in or around the villages where a larger number of houses could be served by one source, thus reducing the cost per house and therefore lowering rents.

The provision of piped water supplies throughout the district will enable the Council to deal with our rural unfit dwellings and rehouse the occupants more easily, by making possible the building of new houses in small groups right in the country, at places where the people are living at present and even on existing sites in some instances, and yet provide them there with all the amenities, and the relief from drudgery, that piped water and mains electricity can yield.

- (10) In the light of these facts it is my duty as Medical Officer of Health to give wholehearted support to the Council's proposals; and, in view of the clamant needs of the district, to urge that permission be given to the Council to proceed with the work at the earliest possible moment.

